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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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TO RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1911
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RUEHGI/AMEMBASSY BANGUI 1032

UNCLAS STATE 055955

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL UNSC KPKO SU

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO BEGIN CONSULTATIONS ON A DRAFT
UN SECURITY COUNCIL PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT ON VIOLENCE IN
ABYEI

¶1. PURPOSE: This is an action request. The Department authorizes USUN to begin consultations with the United Kingdom and France and subsequently the other Security Council member states on the following draft UN Security Council Presidential Statement on recent violence in Abyei:

The Security Council expresses its grave concern about the recent violence and escalating tensions in the Abyei region in Sudan and the resulting casualties and displacement of thousands of civilians.

The Security Council demands that the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) immediately cease hostilities, abide by the May 18, 2008, ceasefire agreement, and withdraw forces from the area.

The Security Council urges all parties to allow the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) to have full freedom of movement in the Abyei area to reduce tensions and prevent further violence. The Council reiterates its call on all parties to support, protect, and facilitate all humanitarian operations and personnel in the Sudan.

The Security Council urges the parties to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) fully, prevent further violence and immediately work to end the political deadlock by establishing interim borders and an interim administration.

The Security Council further calls for the release of the local oil revenues intended to develop the Abyei region, as called for by the CPA.

¶2. BACKGROUND: Clashes between the SPLA and SAF began on May 13, 2008, at a police check point in Abyei town. It appeared to be localized fighting between individuals and later escalated to exchanges of fire and military confrontation between the SPLA and SAF. UNMIS helped implement a May 15 compromise to cease hostilities. After renewed fighting May 16-17, the Ceasefire Joint Monitoring Commission (CJMC) brokered a ceasefire whereby both parties agreed to withdraw forces from the area. More than 100,000 people were affected by the conflict, including 50,000 new internally displaced persons (IDPs). The oil-rich and ethnically important area of Abyei has been long contested by both the North and South, making it a significant unresolved issue in implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and an area greatly at risk for large-scale violence.

¶3. POINT-OF-CONTACT: Grace M. Kang, IO/PSC,
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